

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly add new claims as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121:

1. to 36. (cancelled)

37. (previously presented) An isolated bacterium belonging to the genus *Escherichia*, wherein said bacterium is modified to increase expression of a DNA coding for a protein by increasing the copy number of said DNA, and wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4.

38 and 39. (cancelled)

40. (previously presented) The bacterium according to claim 37, wherein said bacterium is further modified to increase expression of a DNA coding for a protein by increasing a copy number of said DNA, and wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

41 and 42. (cancelled)

43. (previously presented) An isolated bacterium belonging to the genus *Escherichia*, wherein said bacterium is modified to increase expression of a DNA by increasing a copy number of said DNA, wherein said DNA comprises the nucleotide sequence of nucleotide numbers 187 to 804 in SEQ ID NO: 3.

44 and 45. (cancelled)

46. (previously presented) The bacterium according to claim 43, wherein said bacterium is further modified to increase expression of a DNA coding for the protein by increasing a copy number of said DNA, wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

47 and 48 (cancelled)

49. (withdrawn) A method of producing an amino acid comprising
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 37 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of said amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

50. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

51. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

52. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

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53 and 54. (cancelled)

55. (withdrawn) A method of producing an amino acid comprising
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 40 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

56 and 57. (cancelled)

58. (withdrawn) A method of producing an amino acid comprising
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 43 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

59 and 60. (cancelled)

61. (withdrawn) A method of producing an amino acid comprising
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 46 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

62 and 63. (cancelled)

64. (previously presented) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

65. (previously presented) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

66. (previously presented) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

67. (previously presented) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

68. (previously presented) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

69. (previously presented) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

70. (previously presented) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

71. (previously presented) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

72. (previously presented) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

73. (new) An isolated bacterium transformed with a DNA that encodes a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4.

74. (new) An isolated bacterium transformed with a DNA that encodes a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

75. (new) The isolated bacterium of claim 73, wherein said DNA comprises the nucleotide sequence of nucleotide numbers 187 to 804 of SEQ ID NO: 3.

76. (new) The isolated bacterium of claim 74, wherein said DNA comprises the nucleotide sequence of nucleotide numbers 557 to 1171 of SEQ ID NO: 1.

77. (new) A method of producing an amino acid comprising
A) cultivating the bacterium of claim 73 in a culture medium, and
B) recovering said amino acid from the medium.

78. (new) A method of producing an amino acid comprising

- A) cultivating the bacterium of claim 74 in a culture medium, and
- B) recovering said amino acid from the medium.

79. (new) A method of producing an amino acid comprising

- A) cultivating the bacterium of claim 75 in a culture medium, and
- B) recovering said amino acid from the medium.

80. (new) A method of producing an amino acid comprising

- A) cultivating the bacterium of claim 76 in a culture medium, and
- B) recovering said amino acid from the medium.